

March 8, 2001

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Re: Docket No. 00N-1396 and Docket No. 00N-1598

Dear FDA Commissioner:

Hi. I'm writing to object to the lack of requirements and restrictions for genetically engineered food in the new rules for organic products.

I strongly believe that there should be required safety testing and mandatory labeling. To me, the testing is so important. I feel that science is moving so fast that it is not taking time, ^{and} allowing time, to look at genetic modifications "in context." I'm not against genetic engineering, rather, I'm upset with science and agriculture's often cavalier attitude towards genetic modifications.

I have a science degree from Williams College. Although I do mainly public relations and political work, I still have a passion for science and read widely about it. I highly recommend a recent book about genetics to you (it's a quick read): Genetics & the Manipulation of Life: The Forgotten Factor of Context by Craig Holdrege. The book has received strong backing from Wes Jackson of The Land Institute among others. Says Jackson, "...I am tempted to shout that this may be the most essential new book of our time."

Oh, lastly, I am also upset by certain components of the new organic regulations that make it difficult for the organic farmer who sells less than \$5000 a year in product. I do not think that we should be tilting the playing field in favor of the corporations and agribusinesses. I'm a Republican, and doing so is certainly not in the interest of concentrating more power and responsibility in the hands of the people. Smaller government AND smaller businesses are the direction we should be heading. I'm afraid to have to admit it, but until you gentlemen in D.C. take away some more of the advantages you've given agribusiness and corporations, I for one will go against my instincts and vote to keep government bigger than I otherwise would. Why? Because big government is at least a stumbling block, an obstacle, to those who would plunder the land and the health of the American people for the sake of profit.

Thank you for listening. I look forward to your response to the issues I have raised. Be well.

Joy, 00D-1598

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FDA Commissioner

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